REMARKS

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Yuji et al. (JP 2002-110245; hereinafter "JP '245") in view of Nagou et al. (US 5,238,735).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and submit that the cited references do not render the present invention obvious.

Basically, the Examiner acknowledges that JP '245 is silent with respect to a porous film having a porosity of 20-95% and a thickness of 3-50 μm. To make up for the deficiencies of JP '245, Nagou is cited as teaching a microporous shaped articles such as microporous films that can be used as battery separators having a porosity of 20 to 90 % and a thickness of 5 to 200 μm (*see* col. 1, lines 9-11 and 57-58; col. 5, lines 9-10 and 54-55; and col. 7, line 59). Therefore, it is the Examiner's position that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to use the microporous film of Nagou as a battery separator in the lithium ion secondary battery of JP '245.

It is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine the references as suggested by the Examiner with a reasonable expectation of success in achieving the claimed invention.

JP '246 teaches in paragraphs [0004] and [0005] that it is not preferable to use a separator or a nonwoven fabric supporting thereon a polymer to be swelled with an electrolyte. This teaching of JP '245 teaches away from the use of a separator or a nonwoven fabric in JP '245. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to use the microporous film of Nagou as a separator in JP '245 by combining the references based on the disclosures of JP '245 and Nagou.

In addition, in JP '245, the liquid composition, which is obtained by mix-dissolving a oxetane ring-containing polymer etc., the cationic initiator, the electrolyte salt and the lithium electrolyte salt ([0019]), is injected in a container to infiltrate into the gap, and the liquid composition is gelated by normal temperature crosslinking or heat crosslinking ((0020]). Therefore, JP '245 does not disclose "substrate supporting thereon a crosslinking polymer having plural cation-polymerizable functional groups in the molecule" or "porous film substrate," as recited in present claim 1.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention according to claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom is not taught or suggested by JP '245 and Nagou. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-9 is respectfully requested.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below. The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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